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ALOR SETAR, APRIL 11 (BERNAMA) -- DEMOCRACY IN UMNO IS PRACTISED NOT ONLY THROUGH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND SUPREME COUNCIL, DIVISIONAL AND BRANCH MEETINGS BUT ALSO THROUGH CONVENTIONS, PRIME MINISTER AND UMNO PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID TODAY.

OPENING THE KEDAH UMNO CONVENTION HERE, HE SAID THE UMNO SUPREME COUNCIL WAS AWARE THAT OFFICIAL PARTY MEETINGS WERE LIMITED ONLY TO DELEGATES AND IN VIEW OF THIS, CONVENTIONS WERE HELD TO ENABLE PARTY MEMBERS TO GIVE THEIR VIEWS AND PROVIDE USEFUL IDEAS.

CLAIMS BY CERTAIN QUARTERS THAT HE RESTRICTED SUPREME COUNCIL MEMBERS AND CABINET MINISTERS FROM GIVING THEIR VIEWS AND SPEAKING UP WERE UNFOUNDED, UNTRUE AND DOWNRIGHT LIES, HE SAID.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT AT EVERY SUPREME COUNCIL AND CABINET MEETING HE ASKED EVERYONE PRESENT, ONE BY ONE, WHETHER THEY HAD ANY QUESTIONS AND THE MEETING LASTED FOR SEVERAL HOURS.

+IT CANNOT BE THAT I ALONE SPEAK AT SUCH MEETINGS,+ HE SAID TO LOUD APPLAUSE FROM 1,000 CONVENTION PARTICIPANTS. -- MORE  
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THIS SITUATION WAS BROUGHT ABOUT THROUGH THE FAR-SIGHTEDNESS OF THE GOVERNMENT LEADERS, PARTICULARLY FROM UMNO, WHO SUCCEEDED IN OVERCOMING THE PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS WITH FULL RESPONSIBILITY, HE ADDED.

HE SAID UMNO'S SUCCESS IN PROVIDING LEADERSHIP TO THIS COUNTRY WAS NOT DUE TO ITS LARGE MEMBERSHIP BUT BECAUSE OF THE INTEGRITY OF THE LEADERSHIP WHICH PLACED THE INTEREST OF THE PEOPLE ABOVE EVERYTHING ELSE.

UMNO'S HISTORY SHOWED THERE HAD BEEN NO MAJOR SCRAMBLE FOR POWER AFTER THE LATE DATUK ONN JAAFAR RESIGNED AS UMNO PRESIDENT UP TO THE TIME OF THE LATE TUN ABDUL RAZAK, WHILE HAJI SULAIMAN PALESTINE CHALLENGED TUN HUSSEIN ONN.

+HAJI SULAIMAN'S CASE WAS NOT A SERIOUS OPPOSITION BUT ONLY A TEST CASE,+ HE SAID.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID IF THERE WERE PROBLEMS, ALL MATTERS COULD BE DISCUSSED WITHIN THE PARTY.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID IF THE +LOOK EAST POLICY+ WAS UNACCEPTABLE, THIS COULD BE RAISED AT THE MEETING AND THERE NEED NOT BE UNFOUNDED ALLEGATIONS AGAINST HIM. -- MORE  
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+ALL PARTY AND GOVERNMENT PROBLEMS CAN BE DISCUSSED IN THE VARIOUS FORUMS HELD FROM TIME TO TIME,+ HE SAID.

ANY MATTER BECOMING A SOURCE OF DISSATISFACTION COULD BE DISCUSSED AND SETTLED IN THE PROPER WAY AS THIS WAS MUCH MORE BENEFICIAL.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WAS ALSO SAD THAT RUMOURS WERE BEING SPREAD SAYING HIS WIFE DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH WAS +SULKING+ AND NO LONGER WANTED TO ACCOMPANY HIM ON HIS VISITS TO THE VARIOUS STATES.

THE RUMOURS ALSO CLAIMED DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR SITI HASMAH HAD ASKED HIM NOT TO SEEK RE-ELECTION AS PARTY PRESIDENT IF MANY PARTY MEMBERS DID NOT LIKE HIM.

THE PRIME MINISTER ALSO SAID HE DID NOT SUBSCRIBE TO THE CLAIM THAT FOREIGN INVESTORS DID NOT WANT TO INVEST IN MALAYSIA BECAUSE THEY DID NOT AGREE WITH THE POLICY TO INJECT ISLAMIC VALUES IN THE COUNTRY'S ADMINISTRATION. -- MORE

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HE SAID THAT AS A LEADER +I WILL NOT BOW TO PEOPLE WHO DO NOT WISH TO INVEST HERE BECAUSE OF THE ISLAMIC POLICY.+

HE SAID HE AND ALL MALAYS DID NOT NEED THE ENDORSEMENT OF FOREIGNERS IN DETERMINING NATIONAL POLICIES BECAUSE THIS WAS NOT NECESSARY.

+LET GOD JUDGE OUR GOOD ACTIONS.+ -- BERNAMA  
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